

CLAIMS

1. A content-related information delivery system including:

a playback apparatus comprising

5 a monitoring unit operable to monitor a current playback position of a content during playback,

a playback position information generating unit operable to acquire the current playback position from the monitoring unit and generate, using the acquired playback position, playback position information specifying a
10 segment of the content, and

a playback position information transmitting unit operable to transmit the generated playback position information to a server; and

15 the server comprising

a playback position information receiving unit operable to receive the playback position information from the playback apparatus,

a related information acquiring unit operable to
20 acquire information related to the segment of the content specified by the received playback position information, and

a related information transmitting unit operable to transmit the acquired related information to a
25 destination apparatus.

2. A playback apparatus for playing back a content and

requesting a server for information related to the content,
comprising:

a playback position information generating unit
operable to generate playback position information
5 specifying a segment of the content; and

a playback position information transmitting unit
operable to transmit the generated playback position
information to the server.

10 3. The playback apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein
the playback position information generating unit includes:

a selecting subunit operable to receive a user
selection of a desired scene of the content;

an acquiring subunit operable to acquire a playback
15 position of the selected scene of the content; and

a generating subunit operable to generate the playback
position information that includes the acquired playback
position.

20 4. The playback apparatus according to Claim 3, further
comprising:

a monitoring unit operable to monitor a current
playback position of the content during playback, wherein

the acquiring subunit acquires the playback position
25 of the selected scene from the monitoring unit.

5. The playback apparatus according to Claim 4, further

comprising:

a content identifier acquiring unit operable to acquire a content identifier uniquely identifying the content, wherein

5 the monitoring unit monitors the current playback position by measuring a time period elapsed from a start of the playback, and

the generating subunit generates the playback position information that includes the content identifier acquired
10 by the content identifier acquiring unit and the playback position acquired by the acquiring subunit.

6. The playback apparatus according to Claim 5, further comprising:

15 a display unit operable to display the content on a screen; and

an on-screen position acquiring unit operable to receive a user selection of a desired point on the screen displaying the selected scene and acquire an on-screen
20 position of the selected point, wherein

the generating subunit generates the playback position information that includes the content identifier, the playback position, and the on-screen position.

25 7. The playback apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein

the playback apparatus reads the content from a portable recording medium and plays back the read content,

the monitoring unit monitors the current playback position on the recording medium during playback of the content, and

the acquiring subunit acquires the playback position
5 of the selected scene on the recording medium.

8. The playback apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein
the content is composed of a plurality of frames,
each frame includes a playback time showing a time
10 from a start of the content at which the frame is to be
played back, and

the acquiring subunit acquires a playback time of a
frame corresponding to the selected scene.

15 9. The playback apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein
the content is composed of a plurality of frames,
the selecting subunit acquires a frame corresponding
to the selected scene, and

the generating subunit generates the playback position
20 information that includes the acquired frame.

10. The playback apparatus according to Claim 2, further
comprising:

a related information receiving unit operable to
25 receive from the server, information related to the segment
of the content specified by the playback position
information.

11. The playback apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein
the playback apparatus plays back the content in
association with the related information received by the
5 related information receiving unit.

12. A server for delivering information related to a content,
comprising:

a playback position information receiving unit
10 operable to receive playback position information
specifying a segment of the content from a playback apparatus
that plays back the content;

a related information acquiring unit operable to
acquire information related to the segment of the content
15 specified by the received playback position information;
and

a related information transmitting unit operable to
transmit the acquired related information to a destination
apparatus.

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13. The server according to Claim 12, further comprising:

a related information storage unit operable to store,
for each scene of the content, information related to the
scene in association with a playback position of the scene,
25 wherein

the related information receiving unit receives the
playback position information that includes a playback

position of a scene of the content, and

the related information acquiring unit acquires, from the related information storage unit, a piece of related information associated with the playback position that is
5 included in the playback position information.

14. The server according to Claim 13, wherein

the related information storage unit stores, for each scene of the content, the related information which is a
10 frame corresponding to the scene or information generated by processing the frame.

15. The server according to Claim 13, wherein

the related information storage unit stores, for each
15 scene of the content, the related information which is an image appearing in the scene in association with a position of the image on a screen displaying the scene,

the playback position information receiving unit receives the playback position information that includes
20 a playback position of a scene and an on-screen position of an image, and

the related information acquiring unit acquires a piece of related information specified by the playback position and the on-screen position that are included in the received
25 playback position information.

16. The server according to Claim 12, further comprising:

a user identifier receiving unit operable to receive from the playback apparatus a user identifier uniquely identifying a user of the playback apparatus; and

a destination storage unit operable to store a plurality of user identifiers each in association with a piece of destination information showing a destination apparatus for transmission of the related information, wherein

the related information transmitting unit acquires, with reference to the destination storage unit, destination information associated with the user identifier received by the user identifier receiving unit, and transmits the related information to the destination apparatus shown by the acquired destination information.

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17. The server according to Claim 16, wherein

the destination storage unit stores the user identifier uniquely identifying the user of the playback apparatus, in association with a piece of destination information showing the playback apparatus as the destination apparatus, and

the related information transmitting unit transmits the related information to the playback apparatus.

25 18. The server according to Claim 16, wherein

the destination information storage unit stores the user identifier uniquely identifying the user of the

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playback apparatus, in association with a piece of destination information showing, as the destination apparatus, an apparatus other than the playback apparatus, and

5 the related information transmitting unit transmits the related information to said other apparatus shown by the destination information.

19. The server according to Claim 16, further comprising:

10 a billing unit operable to charge the user for the related information, based on the user identifier.

20.- The server according to Claim 10, wherein

15 the playback position information receiving unit receives, as the playback position information, a frame out of a plurality of frames constituting the content, and
 the related information acquiring unit generates the related information by processing the received frame.

20 21. A content-related information request method usable by a playback apparatus that plays back a content and requests a server for information related to the content, the method comprising:

25 a playback position information acquiring step of generating playback position information showing a segment of the content; and

 a playback position information transmitting step

operable to transmit the acquired playback position information to the server.

22. A content-related information request program
5 executable by a playback apparatus that plays back a content and requests a server for information related to the content, the program comprising code operable to cause the playback apparatus to perform:

10 a playback position information acquiring step of generating playback position information showing a segment of the content; and

a playback position information transmitting step operable to transmit the acquired playback position information to the server.

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23. A content-related information delivery method usable by a server that delivers information related to a content, the method comprising:

20 a playback position information receiving step of receiving playback position information from a playback apparatus that plays back the content, the playback position information specifying a segment of the content;

a related information acquiring step of acquiring information related to the segment of the content specified
25 by the received playback position information; and

a related information transmitting step of transmitting the acquired related information to a

destination apparatus.

24. A content-related information delivery program executable by a server that delivers information related to a content, the program comprising code operable to cause the server to perform:

a playback position information receiving step of receiving playback position information from a playback apparatus that plays back the content, the playback position

information specifying a segment of the content;

a related information acquiring step of acquiring information related to the segment of the content specified by the received playback position information; and

a related information transmitting step of transmitting the acquired related information to a destination apparatus.